

# WHAT PARENTS, STUDENTS, AND PROFESSIONALS NEED TO KNOW

TRANSITION AND ACCOMMODATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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## GOALS

- Provide overview of legal differences between high school and college disability services
- Provide ideas for you, to help students make the transition
- Provide tips for students to help themselves
- Point out some of the differences to look for between high school and college
- Provide training on skill development workshops to prepare students for postsecondary education

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## OVERVIEW OF 504/ADA (APPLICABLE TO COLLEGE)

- Affects any institution receiving Federal financial assistance
- “No otherwise qualified individual...” can be denied access based on a disability
- “substantial limitation of one or more major life activities”—not everyone gets blanket accommodations; documentation has to warrant accommodations requested

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OVERVIEW, CONT'D.

- The institution and its academic programs have a right to set academic and technical standards. If the student does not meet those (with or without accommodation), he is not eligible to enroll.
- The institution legally cannot inquire about disability status; therefore, it is the student's responsibility to seek out the disabilities office.

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IDEA AND ADA: A COMPARISON  
*THE EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE*

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ IDEA                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free &amp; Appropriate Mandatory Education</li> <li>• Entitlement Law</li> <li>• Remedial Learning Tools</li> <li>• Outcome Oriented: Successful Learning</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ ADA/Section 504                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optional Education, and definitely <b>not</b> free</li> <li>• Civil Rights Law</li> <li>• Aids and Accommodations</li> <li>• Equal Access—NOT Equal Outcome</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
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Kaiser, S. (1998). International Dyslexia Association Conference

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RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER IDEA, SECTION 504, AND THE ADA

Issue	Responsibility at Secondary Level	Responsibility at Postsecondary Level
Identification	School	Student
Assessment	School	Student
Programming	School/Parent	Student—Institution
Advocacy	School/Parent	Student
Decision Making	Placement Team	Student
Transition Planning	Placement Team	Student

Adapted from : Brinkerhoff, L.B., Shaw, S.F., McGuire, J.M. (1992). Promoting access, accommodations, and independence for college students with learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 25, 417-429.

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WHAT COLLEGES DON'T PROVIDE:

- Personal attendants
- Transportation (unless it's provided to all students)
- Tutoring (unless it's provided to all students)
- Individually prescribed devices and services (ex: hearing aids, physical therapy, speech therapy)



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WHAT CAN EDUCATORS/SCHOOL COUNSELORS/PARENTS DO TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THE TRANSITION?

- Have current and complete medical and/or psychological information; check with college as to what "current" means
- Make sure students have a good understanding of their disability (strengths and weaknesses to work on)
- Train/encourage students to advocate for themselves
- Inform the student about the ADA and Section 504
- Inform the student about accommodation arrangements for testing (ACT/SAT, etc.)
- Help student understand the diploma options as they prepare to exit high school



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WHAT CAN EDUCATORS/SCHOOL COUNSELORS/PARENTS DO, CONT'D.

- Recommend a visit to colleges before deciding
- Recommend that student contact the college disability services office **early** for an orientation to services and accommodations
- Encourage student participation in transition planning while in high school



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WHAT CAN THE STUDENT DO TO PREPARE FOR THE TRANSITION?

- Inquire about admission process to the college of choice
- Contact disability services office
- Inquire about types of academic accommodations that are typically provided for a student with similar disability.
- Inquire about tutoring programs (charge or free).
- Take high school courses that will get student into college
- Be able to describe disability in detail



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WHAT CAN THE STUDENT DO, CONT'D.

- Take on more difficult tasks without the help of teachers or parents
- Learn to use a planner/organizer to be well organized
- Study for 2-4 hours per day
- Begin to consider career options carefully
- Balance strengths and weaknesses
- Take foreign language classes in high school
- Be prepared for the unexpected – there will likely be road blocks!



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IT'S A DIFFERENT WORLD OUT THERE!

Some of the differences between high school and college that you're likely to encounter



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## TESTS

### High School

- More frequent testing (end of chapter, quizzes)
- Chances to make up tests given often
- Review periods, study guides given for tests

### College

- Cumulative (2-3 tests in an entire semester)
- Make-up tests seldom given
- Rarely offer review
- Mastery is ability to apply what is learned

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## TEACHER

### High School

- Takes time to remind
- Available all day
- Offers frequent review
- Trained in teaching
- Checks on your progress frequently; provides feedback on grades, progress, etc.

### College

- Doesn't remind you of incomplete work
- Has office hours
- Expects you to think and to get it
- May not follow the text book
- May not check homework

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## PERSONAL/SOCIAL

### High School

- Is mandatory
- Taxpayer funded
- Less individual responsibility
- Few choices/decisions
- In one building for 8 hours a day
- Very little freedom in a typical school day

### College

- Is voluntary
- Is expensive
- Take responsibility
- Make choices/decisions
- Move from building to building; class schedules will vary
- A great deal of freedom in a typical school day

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## CLASSES

- **High School**
  - Little time between classes
  - Little choice in schedule
  - Smaller class size
  - Little advising required
  - Courses are waived fairly easily
- **College**
  - Breaks between class
  - 12-16 hours per week in class
  - Arrange own schedule
  - Classes can be very large (100+ students)
  - Advising takes time and thought
  - Very few course waivers granted

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## LEARNING STYLES

- Auditory
- Visual
- Tactile/Kinesthetic

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## LET'S PRACTICE

1. What is my disability? Please describe it in terms I can understand.
2. In what specific ways does it affect how I learn?
3. How do I learn best? What are my learning strengths?
4. What academic accommodations are supported by my documentation?
5. What was the date of the last diagnosis of my disability?
6. Take notes and do not give up until you understand the answers to these questions. If the language is confusing, ask someone to put it in terms you can understand.

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